DARK HORSE COMICS

#4

THE ORVILLE

THE WORD OF AVIS

PART 2 OF 2

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THE ORVILLE

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THE WORD OF AVIS PART 2 OF 2

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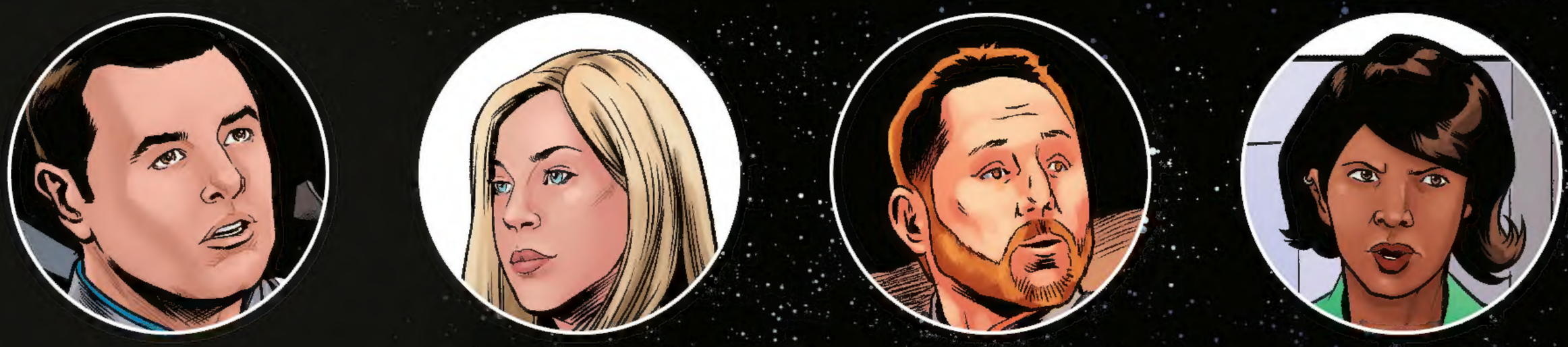
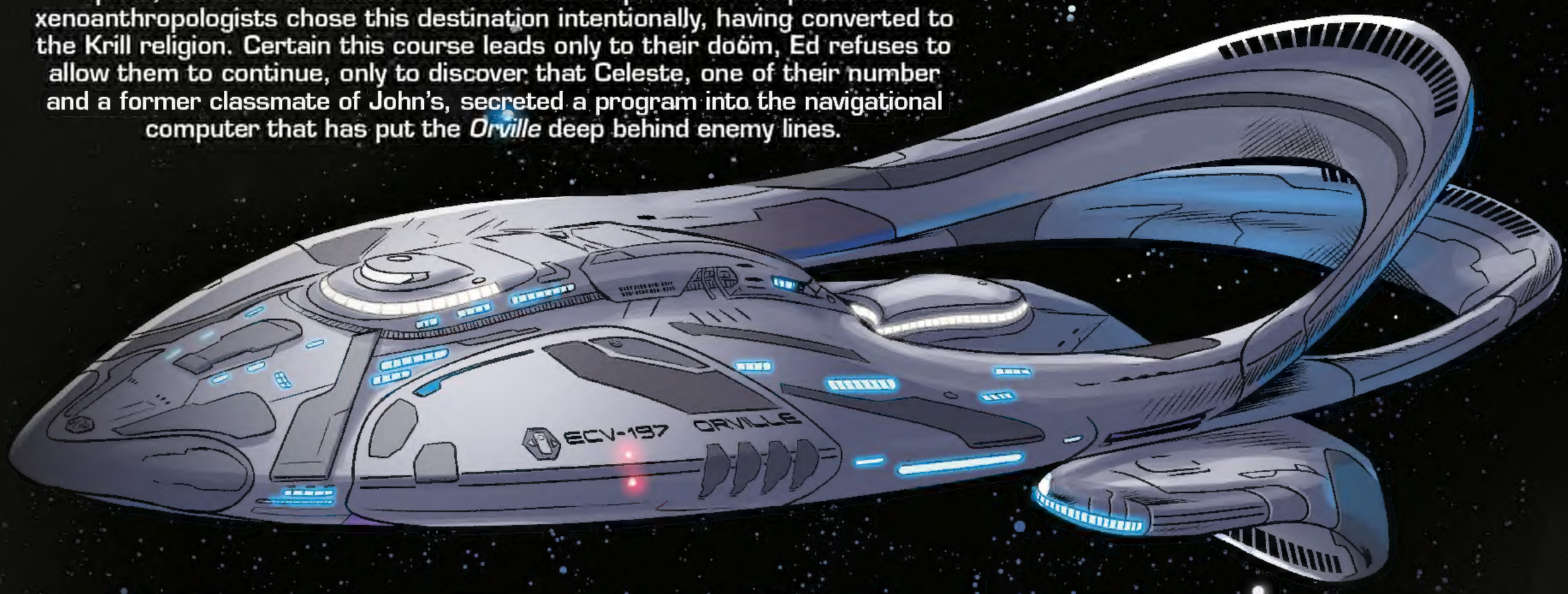
LETTERING
RICHARD STARKINGS & COMICRAFT'S JIMMY BETANCOURT



Previously, on *The Orville*: After intercepting a transport en route to Krill space, the crew are alarmed to learn the ship's small compliment of xenoanthropologists chose this destination intentionally, having converted to the Krill religion. Certain this course leads only to their doom, Ed refuses to allow them to continue, only to discover that Celeste, one of their number and a former classmate of John's, secreted a program into the navigational computer that has put the *Orville* deep behind enemy lines.



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THIRTY LIGHT YEARS INSIDE KRILL TERRITORY.

GORDON...

WE'RE GOING, WE'RE GOING...

"ED, EVEN AT MAXIMUM SPEED..."

...IT'LL TAKE THREE HOURS TO GET BACK TO UNION SPACE.

IT WILL NOT TAKE THAT LONG, LIEUTENANT. BASED ON MY CALCULATIONS IT WILL TAKE TWO POINT SEVEN EIGHT HOURS.

OH, I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER.

WE'VE BEEN INCREDIBLY LUCKY THE KRILL HAVEN'T DETECTED US ALREADY.

IT IS UNLIKELY THAT "LUCK" WILL CONTINUE.

CAPTAIN, I HAVE AN IDEA...

WHEN WE RESCUED YOU AND COMMANDER GRAYSON FROM THE CALIVON ZOO, ISAAC WAS ABLE TO DISGUISE *ORVILLE* AS A CALIVON SHIP, USING THEIR HOLOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY.

WE COULD DO IT AGAIN, ONLY THIS TIME MAKE US LOOK LIKE A KRILL SHIP.

ISAAC?

I AM MAKING THE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS...

...HOLOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY ON LINE...

...WE NOW APPEAR TO BE A KRILL BATTLESHIP.

HOPEFULLY THIS WILL BUY US SOME TIME.

AT LEAST ENOUGH TO FINISH OUR CONVERSATION WITH OUR "GUESTS."

WE ARE NOW ALL UNDER ARREST?

YOU'RE CHARGED WITH SABOTAGE, HIJACKING, AND WHATEVER ELSE I CAN THINK OF.

YOU'VE PUT THIS ENTIRE CREW IN DANGER.

THAT IS NO CONCERN OF MINE. WE WERE TRYING TO GET HOME.

HOME?

YOU WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND. YOU ARE NOT OF AVIS.

CELESTE...

YOU WANT TO TELL ME WHY YOU LIED TO ME?

IT WAS THE WILL OF AVIS.

GIVE ME A BREAK. YOU'RE REALLY BUYING INTO THIS GARBAGE?

IT'S NOT GARBAGE. YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND. WHEN I GRADUATED UNION POINT, I FAILED AT EVERY JOB I HAD. I WAS LOST.

UNTIL I READ THE ANKHANA... IT SPOKE TO ME. IT GAVE ME A PATH. THE POWER OF AVIS IS REAL...

...I UNDERSTAND MY PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE NOW.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO GO LIVE IN KRILL SPACE?

I DON'T WANT TO BE AROUND PEOPLE WHO DON'T BELIEVE.

YEAH, WELL, IF YOU REALLY BELIEVED...

...WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THOUGHT WOULDN'T MATTER.

THERE ARE THREE KRILL SHIPS COMING INTO SENSOR RANGE.
ARE THEY ON AN INTERCEPT COURSE?
NEGATIVE. BUT THEY WILL PASS WITHIN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND KILOMETERS OF US.
WHAT DO WE DO?
CROSS OUR FINGERS?
"CAPTAIN KRATOK, I'VE DETECTED ANOTHER SHIP..."
PUT IT ON THE SCREEN.
IT'S A BATTLE CRUISER. ON A DIRECT HEADING FOR UNION SPACE.

THEY ARE CONDUCTING A LONG RANGE SCAN.

THE CALIVON SCANNED US TOO, AND THEY LET US PASS.

IT IS WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE.

THEN WHY, SAZERON, IS SOMETHING IN MY HEAD TELLING ME IT ISN'T?

THE ANKHANA TEACHES "DO NOT TURN A DEAF EAR TO THE WHISPER, FOR THAT IS THE VOICE OF AVIS."

SCAN IT WITH NEUTRON RADIATION.

NEUTRON RADIATION? WHAT WILL THAT SHOW?

I DO NOT KNOW FOR SURE. BUT AS THE SAZERON ADVISED, I AM LISTENING TO THE WHISPER.

VERY WELL.

CAPTAIN, THEY'RE SCANNING US.

AGAIN?

THIS SCANNING BEAM IS DIFFERENT. IT CONTAINS NEUTRON RADIATION.

ED, ISN'T THAT WHAT SCREWED UP OUR HOLOGRAPHIC DISGUISES?

OH CRAP.

THE HOLOGRAPHIC GENERATOR IS MALFUNCTIONING...

"...WE ARE VISIBLE."

IT IS A UNION VESSEL. THE *ORVILLE.*

AVIS NEVER FAILS US.

ALL SHIPS, INTERCEPT COURSE. FIRE WHEN IN RANGE.

THEY HAVE CHANGED COURSE. THE KRILL SHIPS WILL INTERCEPT US IN THREE MINUTES.

WE NEED A PLACE TO HIDE.

ISAAC, SCAN FOR NEARBY SYSTEMS.

THERE IS A PLANETARY SYSTEM POINT FIVE LIGHT YEARS AWAY.

IT HAS AN ASTEROID FIELD REPLETE WITH HEAVY METALS THAT MAY CONFUSE THE KRILL SENSORS.

GORDON, GET US THERE.

THEY ARE HEADED FOR THE ASTEROID FIELD.

ORDER THE TWO SHIPS TO FOLLOW.

WE WILL HOLD POSITION OUTSIDE THE FIELD IN CASE THE UNION SHIP ELUDES THEM.

THAT CALIVON THING IS WORTHLESS!

THE HEAVY METALS IN THE ASTEROID ARE INTERFERING WITH THEIR TARGETING SENSORS.

NOW WE JUST HAVE TO HOPE THEY DON'T LAUNCH MISSILES.

THEY HAVE JUST LAUNCHED MISSILES.

MAYBE NEXT TIME KEEP IT TO YOURSELF.

THE MISSILES HAVE SOPHISTICATED GUIDANCE SYSTEMS. THEY HAVE LOCKED ON TO US.

WE'LL NEED COVER.

GORDON, GET US CLOSER TO THAT BIG ONE.

CLOSER?

THE MISSILES ARE FIFTY METERS AWAY AND CLOSING.

CAPTAIN, THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL ON THE *ORVILLE* IS INCREASING.

AND ON THE MISSILES TOO...

GORDON, STAND BY TO PULL UP AND HEAD FOR THAT CAVE.

NOW!

IT'S GOING TO BE CLOSE.

WE'RE IN!

ED, THE OPENING...

"...WE'RE SEALED IN."

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE MISSILES' DETONATIONS RESULTED IN A CAVE IN.

WELL, THAT'LL MAKE IT HARDER FOR US TO FIND.

OR THEY WON'T HAVE TO GO TO THE TROUBLE OF BURYING US.

NO SIGN OF THE UNION VESSEL.

EXCELLENT. INFORM CAPTAIN KRATOK THAT IT HAS BEEN DESTROYED.

HOW THE HELL DID THEY KNOW TO SCAN US WITH NEUTRON RADIATION?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT MEANS THAT WE CAN'T USE THAT CALIVON DEVICE AGAIN.

WE'VE GOT BIGGER PROBLEMS THAN THAT.

THEY'RE GOING TO NOTICE THERE'S NO DEBRIS.

AND THEN IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY FIND US.

IF WE JUST HAD A FEW MINUTES TO GET OUT OF THE ASTEROID FIELD, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO JUMP TO QUANTUM AND GET AWAY.

TUNNELING OUT OF THE CAVE WILL TAKE THREE POINT SEVEN MINUTES.

THIS ACTION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE KRILL SHIPS.

WAIT, I GOT AN IDEA. WE CAN USE THE CALIVON HOLOGRAPHIC GENERATOR.

OH, HEY BUDDY, DID YOU JUST MISS THE PART OF THE CONVERSATION WHERE WE TALKED ABOUT WHAT A CLUSTERFUCK THAT WAS?

YEAH, JOHN I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO GET AWAY DISGUISED AS A KRILL SHIP.

NO, WE USE IT TO DISGUISE ANOTHER SHIP...

...AS THE *ORVILLE.*

WE DISGUISE THE TRANSPORT SHIP, AND PILOT IT BY REMOTE CONTROL. ITS ENGINES ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN A SHUTTLE'S SO IT'LL BE HARDER TO CATCH.

AND SINCE IT'S A ONE WAY TRIP, WE CAN RUN THEIR ENGINES AT MAXIMUM.

THAT MIGHT WORK.

THAT HAS TO WORK. GET ON IT. WE DON'T KNOW HOW LONG IT'S GOING TO TAKE THEM TO NOTICE THERE'S NO DEBRIS...

YOU DIDN'T SCAN FOR DEBRIS?

NO, SIR.

THEY USED THE EXPLOSION TO COVER THEIR ESCAPE.

THEY'RE HIDING. SEARCH UNTIL YOU FIND THEM.

YES SIR.

LET'S FIRST SEE IF WE CAN GET THE ENGINES ONLINE, THEN WE'LL HOOK UP THE CALIVON HOLOGRAPHIC GENERATOR.

MAYBE WE SHOULD GET YOUR GIRLFRIEND TO HELP.

SHE'S NOT MY GIRLFRIEND.

WELL, SHE WASN'T EXACTLY LEAVING HERSELF OPEN TO OTHER OPTIONS.

YAPHIT, YOU GETTING ANYTHING ON YOUR END?

THAT'S WHAT I WAS SAYING, SHE WASN'T--OH, YOU MEANT THE SHIP. NO, I GOT NOTHING.

LAMARR TO CAPTAIN, WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM...

LOCKED

...WE'RE LOCKED OUT OF THE TRANSPORT SHIP'S SYSTEMS.

I'M BETTING IT'S THE WILL OF AVIS.

YEAH. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT?

OUR SISTER SHIPS HAVE FAILED TO LOCATE THE UNION VESSEL.

THEY COULD NOT HAVE ESCAPED! THEY MUST BE IN THAT FIELD SOMEWHERE!

I HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING ON THE LARGE ASTEROID...

WHY DID YOU LOCK OUT YOUR SYSTEMS?

AVIS GUIDED US TO PROTECT OUR SHIP. WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH IT?

WE NEED IT AS A DISTRACTION TO ESCAPE KRILL SPACE.

THAT IS NO CONCERN OF OURS.

SO YOU'RE GOING TO SACRIFICE EVERYONE ABOARD THIS SHIP?

IT IS THE WILL OF AVIS.

BUT IF YOU FREE US, WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO CONVINCE OUR KRILL BROTHERS TO LET YOU RETURN HOME IN PEACE.

YOU DON'T SERIOUSLY--

CRSSSHHH

GRAYSON TO BRIDGE. BORTUS, WHAT THE HELL IS GOING--

THE KRILL HAVE BEGUN DRILLING.

IT IS CAUSING A SYMPATHETIC VIBRATION THAT IS RESULTING IN DEBRIS FALLING FROM THE CAVE CEILING.

IN A CONFINED SPACE LIKE THIS, THAT COULD OVERLOAD A LOT OF OUR SYSTEMS.

JOHN, GET TO ENGINEERING, WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.

CRSSSHHH

THIS IS OUR CHANCE. WE'LL HIDE ABOARD OUR SHIP, AND WHEN OUR BRETHREN FINISH TUNNELING THROUGH, WE'LL ESCAPE.

WHAT HAPPENED?

THE SECURITY SYSTEM OVERLOADED.

I'LL GET HIS GUN.

COME ON.

WE MADE IT.

AVIS IS WITH US. RELEASE THE LOCKOUT, WE'LL START THE ENGINES.

I... DON'T THINK WE SHOULD LEAVE.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THEY NEED THIS SHIP. WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM TO DIE.

IT IS THE WILL OF AVIS.

UH, DARDEN, I THINK SHE'S RIGHT.

ME TOO. WE SHOULD HELP THEM.

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MINDS? THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO LIVE A PURE LIFE! THE LIFE TELEYA TAUGHT US ABOUT!

THEY DESERVE TO DIE FOR TRYING TO STOP US! IT IS THE WILL--

...THE WILL OF AVIS...

...YEAH, WE HEARD.

STATUS: LOCKED

YOU TRICKED US!

CRSSSHHH

MERCER TO BRIDGE. BORTUS, YOU CAN STOP PUTTING ON THE SHOW...

I AM NO LONGER "PUTTING ON THE SHOW." THE KRILL ARE NOW ACTUALLY TUNNELING THROUGH TO US.

OH.

CELESTE, WE'RE OUT OF TIME. WILL YOU RELEASE THE LOCKOUTS?

YES...

NO!

I WON'T LET YOU! AHHH!

GUY WAS GETTING ON MY NERVES.

Moments later...

SIR, THE UNION VESSEL...

ALL SHIPS, PURSUE!

THEY TOOK THE BAIT.

LET'S GO. TAKE US TO QUANTUM AS SOON AS WE'VE CLEARED THE ASTEROID FIELD.

BING

COME IN.

HOPE I'M NOT BOTHERING YOU.

NO. THANK YOU FOR GETTING ME THESE QUARTERS.

YOU HELPED WHEN IT MATTERED. IT MEANT A LOT.

YEAH, EXCEPT NOW I HAVE NOTHING.

I THOUGHT THE ANKHANA GAVE ME AN IDENTITY. NOW THAT THAT'S GONE... I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO I AM.

I GET THAT. I REALLY DO.

LITTLE WHILE AGO I WAS A LITTLE LOST. HAD TO FIGURE OUT WHO I WAS, GET MY LIFE ON A NEW TRACK.

HOW'D YOU DO IT?

TOOK A HELPING HAND FROM A FRIEND.

EPILOGUE

"WE WERE TRICKED!"

THEY ARE BACK IN UNION SPACE BY NOW.

IT IS THE WILL OF AVIS.

AND IT IS JUST AS WELL.

SINCE MY ESCAPE, THAT SHIP, THE *ORVILLE*, HAS BEEN OF INTEREST TO ME.

OH? WHY IS THAT?

ITS COMMANDER IS SOMEONE I HAVE PLANS FOR...

...VERY SPECIAL PLANS.